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Market News Reports
on Processing Crops

THE WHOLESOME MEAT ACT AT THE GRASS ROOTS

By Dr. R. J. Keller

EXPERTS OF THE U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service recently met with State meat inspection and public health officials in eight regional conferences that have written a significant chapter in Federal-State cooperation.

The purpose was to help reach an understanding on the role of the States in checking small meat plants which sell only within State boundaries. The occasion was the drawing nearer of the date for complete implementation of the Wholesome Meat Act.

Under the Wholesome Meat Act, passed by Congress in December 1967, these small plants will fall under the jurisdiction of the States which have until this December—or December 1970 if sufficient progress is shown—to bring their own inspection systems up to Federal standards.

The small meat plant operators were concerned that the stringent Federal standards, covering every significant detail of construction and equipment, would be difficult or perhaps impossible to live with. Some plant operators saw these require-

ments as too strict to comply with and contemplated leaving the packing business.

In most cases, the C&MS officials found the fears of the plant operators were based on a lack of factual information.

The regional sessions were very informal, with the State officials outlining the problems in their States. C&MS speakers discussed the facets of the regulations most applicable to small plants. Questions and answers took up considerable time.

The C&MS team hoped to prepare the State officials to calm the apprehensions of the small packers. The theory was that solid information is of key importance to a packer worried about compliance with the law.

The typical small plant coming under State inspection is run by a father and his son, slaughtering per-

haps five animals a day, only two or three days a week. The owners usually run a locker-freezer business and cut and pack meat for local folks.

Thanks to the regional meetings, the State officials can advise these small operators that the inspection laws will not impose on them the same requirements applying to packing houses slaughtering several thousand animals a day. C&MS recommends, for example, that dressing rails for cattle be 11 feet above the floor. In many small plants the rails are only 9 or 10 feet high. As long as special precautions are taken to keep the carcass from touching the floor, C&MS told the State officials, the lower rail height is permissible.

C&MS men who attended the sessions said the spirit of cooperation between the Federal and State officials measurably improved during the course of the two-day meetings. And the State officials must likewise be getting the message across to the small plant operators. Reports from the field indicate that fear and apprehension among the small plant operators have dropped off significantly since the regional meetings. □

The author is Head, Facilities Group, Facilities, Equipment and Foreign Programs Branch, Technical Services Division, C&MS, USDA.

The Personal Touch of Sandra Brookover



“WHEN I’M IN FRONT of a TV camera, I imagine a group of people sitting attentively on the edge of their chairs inside the lens. I like speaking to live audiences, so I just transpose them to the television studio.”

These are the words of a young woman who has performed in front of many TV cameras across the Nation. But Sandra Brookover is not a performer in the conventional sense. Instead, the programs which she presents on television, radio, and before live audiences are given for the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As a consumer meat specialist for C&MS’ Livestock Division, it is Sandy’s responsibility to tell as many people as possible about the guides which USDA offers them in buying meat . . . the USDA grades.

It would be easy to give a set speech about USDA grades and how to use them in planning meals—but Sandy never does.

“I want my programs to be lively. I want the audience to feel that what I say is directed to them individually. I also want to make sure that the information I give them will be helpful in their meat buying and meal planning. After all, nearly 25 percent of their food dollar—that’s a lot—is spent on meat purchases.”

And in the livestock and meats field, Sandy’s knowledge is exten-

sive. Born in Kansas, the daughter of a large-scale cattle feeder, Sandy first became interested in the cattle business when she took a summer job in one of her father’s feed lots. When the time came to go to college, she had already decided to major in animal science.

“It wasn’t my major, though, because Stephens College didn’t offer courses in animal science. Instead, I took courses in foods and nutrition. Later, when I transferred to Kansas State, I did study some animal science, but I also discovered a new interest. I liked speaking before audiences—and I was especially fascinated with radio and TV. When I graduated, my degree was in Speech/Radio-TV.”

Sandy’s job at USDA offers a challenge that few other jobs could offer. It means a chance to perform a real public service and the opportunity to work with people on a national level, teaching them her favorite subject—meats. Also, the programs touch more than the individual consumer. When explaining the USDA Meat Acceptance Service, a service performed by meat graders for large-scale buyers, she works with professionals such as hospital dietitians, nutritionists, school lunch directors, and purchasing officials for other institutional users of meat.

Sandy brings to her position not only a lively, out-going personality, originality, and a fund of know-

ledge, but also some rather strong convictions. Some of these traits reveal themselves in comments she has made about her work.

- “I’m on a crusade to see housewives recognize the USDA grade shield as a mark of consistent quality. Also, I would like to place a meat thermometer, a pair of tongs, and a boning knife in every kitchen. With USDA grades as a guide to quality and preparation, any cut of meat can be served with pride, but too many housewives don’t know how to select meat or cook it. They could also stretch their meat dollar by knowing how to use the less expensive cuts.”

- “I never give a canned talk! Being so familiar with the subject, I try to adapt each presentation to the specific audience, depending upon their interest. I find that this way I can judge the reactions of a live audience and hold their interest throughout the program. If I’m speaking before a TV camera, I find that this method also has advantages because it creates a more spontaneous type of presentation.”

Sandy’s lectures for national, State, and regional meetings, and her radio and TV appearances, are free. For more information, or requests for appearances, write to her at this address: Livestock Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. □

Market News Keeps Pace with Livestock Industry

HOW DID YOU SELL your last batch of fed cattle? Did you ship them to a terminal market—sell them at a local auction—or sell them direct to a packing plant?

Did you make your decision on the basis of prices currently being paid at these points? If you didn't, you most likely could have, because the Federal-State market news service reports prices being paid for all species of livestock at such outlets across the country.

The Livestock Market News Service, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service in cooperation with State departments of agriculture, works constantly to keep its reports in tune with the changing nature of livestock marketing.

This service provides both sellers and buyers with accurate, unbiased, and up-to-the-minute reports on livestock and meat prices, demand, and supply in all marketing channels. These reports, available through newspapers, radio, television, automatic telephone recorder systems, and mailed reports, provide both sellers and buyers of livestock a solid basis on which to reach marketing decisions.

Keeping up with the rapidly changing livestock marketing structure is quite a challenge. For example, although the trend toward decentralization in livestock marketing has been going on for years, it has been accelerating recently.

The shift from central terminal markets toward auctions and direct sales to meatpackers has proceeded steadily as meatpackers have moved their plants away from the terminals and closer to the supply source.

This shift has been accelerated by the trend toward selling slaughter

cattle on the basis of carcass grade and weight. One estimate from USDA's Packers and Stockyards Administration is that more than one-fourth of slaughter cattle bought direct are bought on a carcass basis.

The C&MS meat grading service now grades for quality nearly 85 percent of the grain-fed beef. C&MS yield grades for beef, which measure quantity of retail cuts available from a carcass, are being used more and more by the industry. At present about 20 percent of the beef that is quality-graded by C&MS is yield-graded also. The quality and yield grades provide a frame of reference for pricing cattle and carcasses.

To meet these changes in the marketing structure, livestock market news has constantly been redesigning its programs. Many changed and new services have been provided by shifting program emphasis, for only limited funds have been available for expansion.

USDA livestock and meat market reporters now travel to auctions, feedlots, ranches, and packing plants to get the information they once gathered only at terminal markets. At present, USDA covers 22 direct marketing areas and 22 terminal markets, many of which sell partially by the auction method. In cooperation with 21 States, USDA coordinates the collection and dissemination of data on about 180 auction markets throughout the Nation.

Livestock market news offices covering large terminals issue for each workday an early market flash, a midsession report, and a closing report. The early flash generally includes a brief description of the day's supply, the opening market trend, and price quotations. The midses-

sion report normally contains the price trend and quotations representing the bulk of the day's sales, and the last report gives late changes. Each office also prepares a weekly market summary on each class of slaughter animal.

A high proportion of feeder livestock is marketed through auctions. In some areas, particularly in the South, auctions are the principal market channel for all livestock species. In many States, State reporters cover the auction, and the market reports (including receipts, description of supply and demand conditions, price trend, and quotations) are released in local areas and in addition are summarized and disseminated through a central office supervised by a USDA reporter.

The State reporters are trained in USDA livestock grades and reporting techniques. The USDA Market News man distributes the news nation-wide via the teletypewriter—over USDA's 22,000-mile leased-wire network. Usually, the information is released both by individual auction and in a composite report.

Direct sales are covered by USDA market news representatives in almost every major direct sales area. Direct sales reports (including both current sales and contract sales) are released on a daily, semiweekly, or weekly basis, depending on the area's trading volume. At present, USDA has direct sales reports available for part or all of Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, southern Minnesota, Kansas, western Nebraska, North Dakota, Indiana, Kentucky, and most of the western States.

Meat market reports have become extremely valuable as a source of

price information for all segments of the industry. Although meat trade reports were the first livestock market news reports issued more than 50 years ago, they were not widely used until recent years.

The development of a national market for meat, in contrast to local and regional markets, and increased direct and carcass grade-and-weight sales have made meat reports a more important indicator of market conditions. These reports have been expanded and now cover carload sales of dressed meat in most major producing areas and in larger metropolitan consuming areas.

The Federal-State market news program in Iowa reports daily on carlot prices of beef and pork. This report, covering information from packers throughout Iowa and in adjacent States, represents about one-third of the Nation's meat. Daily carlot meat reports are also issued covering trading at Chicago, Omaha, and Denver, in addition to reports for the East and West Coasts. A semiweekly report is released for the western Texas and western Kansas area.

A very recent change in the livestock industry at the meatpacking and processing level is the cutting of carcasses into wholesale and oven-ready cuts at the point of slaughter. USDA market news recently initiated a report on prices for these fabricated cuts of beef. The report, which covers the consumption areas of Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, includes cuts prepared according to uniform cutting procedures (specified in USDA's Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications). This report will be expanded as standard meat fabrication at packing plants is increased.

The livestock and meat industry certainly has changed over the years, and continues to do so at an increasing pace. Significant changes in livestock and meat market reports indicate response to changing industry needs. The challenge ahead is to continue to keep abreast of change. It is an essential element in fulfilling the responsibility to provide timely and accurate market information for sound marketing decisions. □

How to Buy CANNED and FROZEN VEGETABLES



Read this new informative pamphlet to learn about the U.S. quality grades for these vegetables.

WANT TO SERVE a really tender, flavorful vegetable—that looks attractive, too—at a special luncheon or dinner? Try U.S. Grade A or Fancy canned or frozen asparagus.

For almost as good quality, at less cost—for instance, in vegetables that you serve often to your family—canned or frozen peas, corn, or green beans, try U.S. Grade B or Extra Standard.

And for a really thrifty buy, for

a vegetable to use in homemade soup, try U.S. Grade C or Standard canned tomatoes.

If you don't know about U.S. grades of quality for canned and frozen vegetables, you can learn with the help of a new pamphlet prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

"How to Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables" describes the U.S. grades of quality for canned and frozen vegetables and tells about the available styles (such as whole, cut, diced) for each vegetable. Both grade and style affect the price of the vegetable, and how you may want to use it. The pamphlet also gives tips on serving sizes, container sizes, and tells you what to look for on labels.

The U.S. grade name or grade shield may be on the label of cans and packages of vegetables that have been packed under continuous USDA inspection. C&MS' Fruit and Vegetable Division provides official inspection service and grade certification to processors and distributors who request the service and pay a fee for it.

While USDA inspection for quality is strictly voluntary, and official inspection may not have been performed on many shipments, most processors and distributors pack canned and frozen vegetables according to the U.S. grade standards, to establish the value of the product in wholesale trading. And even if the grade isn't shown on the label of a can or package, pricing differentials between grades or quality levels usually carry through to the retail store.

All grades of canned and frozen vegetables are wholesome and nutritious, but you can choose the grade that suits your needs, your purpose, and your pocketbook by learning the differences between them.

You can obtain a single copy of "How to Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 167, after July 30 by writing to the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please use your Zip code. □

In a national dairy products judging contest: Students match wits with experts

By Eugene T. McGarrahan

EVERY YEAR DAIRY and food science students from more than a score of colleges around the country match their wits with experts from industry and government in judging the quality of five dairy products—butter, Cheddar cheese, ice cream, cottage cheese, and milk.

The event is the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest. The annual affair, first held in 1916, is sponsored by the American Dairy Science Association and the Dairy and Food Industries Supply Association, for the purpose of attracting promising college students to careers in the dairy and food industries. Contest rules provide for government supervision by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Currently the contest superintendent is Harold E. Meister, who is Deputy Director of the Dairy Division in USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. USDA has recognized the value of the contest as a means of improving the quality of dairy products and of maintaining a close liaison with agricultural colleges.

This year's contest will take place on November 3, 1969, at New Orleans, Louisiana.

Three students are selected by each of the participating colleges on the basis of their scholastic achievements. Most carry a major in dairy and food science and hope to enter some aspect of these fields after graduation. Many of the students who are selected have previously entered and won dairy judging contests at their colleges or have won regional tournaments. Finally, each student has taken a special elective course in dairy judging.

How is the Dairy Products Evaluation Contest conducted?

Each student is allowed 40 minutes to judge 10 samples of each of the dairy products included in the contest. The students who come

closest to matching the decisions of the experts are declared winners. In addition to individual prizes, team prizes are also granted, usually in the form of fellowships to the colleges represented by the teams.

What are some of the methods each student uses in judging dairy products?

First and foremost he uses his five senses—sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Flavor is the most important factor in judging quality of dairy products so a student's taste buds are his best allies. He records his reactions on special scorecards designed for each of the five dairy products tested. Descriptive words are permissible; for example, in judging milk some of the words used to describe the off-quality are "barny," "bitter," "cowy," "cooked," "garlic/onion," "metallic," and "salty."

Tasting milk does not mean a student actually swallows it. He rolls it in his mouth long enough to let the taste buds react. A similar procedure is used by wine and coffee tasters.

To keep his mouth fresh for the dozens of samples of milk and dairy products he must sample, the student regularly rinses his mouth with fresh water to clear the taste. If an exceptionally strong flavor is to be removed, a student may eat an apple or he can rinse his mouth with orange juice, buttermilk, or salt water.

When judging cheese, two other senses come into use—feel and smell. How the cheese *kneads* in the fingers is a guide to quality. Moreover, a quick *whiff* of cheese aroma reveals much about the flavor and overall quality of the product.

The eyes play an important role, too, when judging dairy products. The students rely on their eyes to determine the overall appearance of

each product, and to detect defects in color and texture.

It might be obvious why the eyes, nose, tongue or fingers are important in determining the quality of dairy products, but the ear can play a vital role, too. When judging butter, for example, each student must use a special tool—known as a trier—to take a plug from each sample. As the trier goes into the butter, the student listens for a characteristic sound that tells if free moisture is present.

Training for the annual contest involves many hours of judging samples in classes conducted by college professors who also act as team coaches. Training aids include textbooks on judging dairy products and the USDA official grade standards and specifications for dairy products. These are developed and issued by C&MS' Dairy Division and help the student to base his judgments on definitive quality standards set forth by the Federal Government.

Many of the procedures used by the students in judging dairy products are based on official grading practices established by the Dairy Division for the Federal-State grading programs.

The Federal quality standards for butter and Cheddar cheese also are the basis for the USDA grades consumers may see on these products at the grocery store. For example, there are two consumer grades for Cheddar cheese—U.S. Grades AA and A, and three for butter—U.S. Grade AA, A and B. The top grades mean that the products have uniform high quality, highly pleasing flavor, are made from select ingredients, and are manufactured under sanitary conditions. □

The author is Assistant Chief, Standardization Branch, Dairy Division, C&MS, USDA.

Vitamin-Enriched USDA Foods Get Tender Loving Care

By John B. Wegener

VITAMINS, MINERALS, and tender loving care—these are the extra ingredients the U.S. Department of Agriculture adds to the foods it buys for needy families and school lunch programs.

Flour, cornmeal, rice, and other cereal products, for example, are enriched with iron and B vitamins. Instant mashed potatoes are fortified with vitamins A and C, and grape juice with vitamin C.

Where's the tender loving care? That's what inspectors with USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service provide when they check these food products to be sure they measure up to specifications. C&MS specifications for foods purchased for the needy family and school lunch programs require these foods to be of at least as high quality as that found in any good supermarket. And C&MS inspectors, who check the quality of all foods USDA uses in these programs, assure that the foods meet the specifications.

Products with added minerals and vitamins are carefully tested to be sure the additions are correct. C&MS' Fruit and Vegetable Division chemists use various analytical methods to check fortification of such products as grape juice and instant mashed potatoes.

To determine the amount of vitamin C in a substance, they use a titration method. The original sample, such as canned grape juice, is treated with a special dye that is

sensitive to vitamin C. The dye solution is added to the juice drop by drop until the color definitely changes to pink. By measuring the amount of dye needed to change the mixture's color, the chemists can



USDA chemists check the amount of vitamin A in fortified instant mashed potatoes.

calculate the amount of vitamin C in the sample.

To find out how much vitamin A is in a food product, chemists use the spectrophotometric method, involving measurement of a highly sensitive light beam after it passes through a sample solution. The original sample of a food, like instant mashed potatoes, is treated with alkali, heated, and placed in a

funnel. The vitamin A is then extracted from the sample with ether which mixes with the vitamin A, but not the rest of the substance. The layer containing the vitamin A and ether is water-washed to take out impurities added by the alkaline substance. The ether is then evaporated on a steam bath leaving a small residue containing concentrated vitamin A. This residue is redissolved into a measured volume of isopropyl alcohol and placed into a spectrophotometer.

The amount of light that passes through the sample solution is compared to the amount of light that passes through an alcohol solution containing no vitamin A. By comparing the two light beam measurements, the amount of vitamin A contained in the original sample can be calculated.

Through these two testing methods, USDA chemists insured that the proper amount of fortification was used in 17 million pounds of instant mashed potatoes and three million gallons of canned grape juice bought by USDA during fiscal year 1968 for the school lunch and family food help programs. □

The author is Head of the Washington, D.C., laboratory, Processed Products Inspection Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, C&MS, USDA.

Volunteers Learn

In Montgomery County, Md., they use their talents to organize

“WHO IS HELPING WHOM?” This could be your question if you were to visit a class run by Marguerite Tollefson and her volunteers in Montgomery County, Md. In this county citizens are pitching in to assist Mrs. Tollefson in her efforts to raise the standard of living for low-income families. Mrs. Tollefson is a home agent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Federal-State Extension Service. For 4 years she has been vigorously pursuing her goal of educating the poor.

There are over 7,000 families with incomes of less than \$4,000 a year in Montgomery County, where the Food Stamp Program has been operating since April 1968 through the joint cooperation of the county and USDA’s Consumer and Marketing Service.

Mrs. Tollefson is a firm believer that volunteers want to help low-income people, but in realistic, practical ways. Therefore, she wants volunteers who are capable and are willing to use their talent and energy to do a difficult job, one that takes hard work to see results. The many volunteers are indispensable to carrying out extension programs

for low-income families in Montgomery County.

Volunteer women are involved in the classes held almost every Thursday morning three seasons out of the year—fall, winter, and spring—at the Christ Congregational Church in Silver Spring. There are similar programs in other parts of Montgomery County but this church is being used for Takoma Park, Silver Spring, and Wheaton residents.

The classes are run in a series of 6 to 8 weeks during each of the three seasons. This past fall, for example, a cooking class was held. In the winter, weight control and sewing classes met. Mrs. Tollefson taught the sewing class herself and is now hoping that two of the best students in the class might be able to teach the next class. The spring session offered an 8-week course in family living.

Once started in classes, the low-income women, mostly mothers of young children, usually ask for more. This enthusiasm is largely due to the efforts of Mrs. Tollefson and her volunteers. For the most part the low-income women are mothers on welfare or mothers of children in

the Head Start Program. Many are recruited from public health clinics or from Emergency Homes (a non-profit organization formed to help homeless families).

Each Thursday morning, class is held from 10-12 a.m., followed by a free lunch. These are snack-type lunches, low in calories, high in protein (for the benefit of the weight watchers). Examples of what might be served are Swedish meatballs, deviled eggs, and bologna cubes.

While the mothers are attending class, the young children are at play in the nursery rooms. Volunteers help out here as well. The children are fed separately in groups of 8 to 10. This gives the mothers a chance to visit with each other after class.

The children don’t mind a busy day having the morning and lunchtime to themselves, for they enjoy such activities as playing games, singing, and painting. The nursery provides a good learning atmosphere since the volunteers’ children come to the nursery along with the youngsters of low-income families.

Actually, the child-caring system is just as important to the volunteers

After showing weight-control students party foods they can eat occasionally, Mrs. Tollefson gives tips on good nutrition and calorie counting.



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...e and run classes for low-income women.

as it is to the low-income mothers. With some of the volunteers teaching and playing with all of the children, the rest are free to work with the mothers.

Transportation problems that might limit the number of volunteers and low-income mothers are eliminated by the carpool system that is used. Some of the volunteers are solely interested in driving cars to and from the church each week.

Nutrition education is an important part of all the classes, particularly the cooking and weight control classes. Because Montgomery County has the Food Stamp Program, the volunteers have been teaching these young mothers what food stamps are, who is eligible to receive them, and where they can purchase them so that they can buy their families additional nutritious foods.

Mrs. Tollefson teaches her weight-control class which foods are low in calories, high in protein, and give the needed amount of other nutrients. She shows how to budget their food money to feed their families on as little as \$5 per week per person without sacrificing their nutrition

needs. Class materials offer low-calorie, low-cost recipes for her students to use. Here are a couple of samples:

Cream of Vegetable or Cream of Chicken Soup

1 cup water

1 vegetable or chicken bouillon cube

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup nonfat dry milk

Heat (do not boil) and serve. Pieces of chicken, celery, or mushrooms may be added for variety.

Baked Fish Fillets

Put one pound frozen fish fillets in baking pan. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, paprika, and lemon juice. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes. Makes four 3-ounce servings.

The students in this class also do exercises before and after class to learn that being fit is as important as eating the proper foods.

"Who is helping whom?" In Montgomery County, a good guess is that everyone benefits—and many long-lasting friendships are made—from middle and lower-income mothers and their children working together. □

The women learn about well-balanced meals (below) and put this to use at lunch (right).



FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKET NEWS REPORTS

MARKET NEWS REPORTS on prices, supplies, and market condition for fresh fruits and vegetables are well-known to growers, shippers, and wholesale buyers in the fresh fruit and vegetable industry. These reports, prepared by the Federal-State Market News Service, are made available daily throughout the Nation to aid in the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Perhaps not so well-known are market news reports on certain processing crops. Because many fruit and vegetable crops for processing are contracted for by processors before or during the growing season, market news is not needed to the extent that it is in fresh market trading. However, some processing crops—notably berries—are still purchased by processors on an open market basis. Reports on processing crops are therefore not so extensive as those on fresh market crops, and the information provided differs because it is tailored to the needs of the particular industry.

If you grow or process strawberries, blueberries, caneberries, red tart cherries, grapes for wine, apples, potatoes, sweetpotatoes, or asparagus, some of the Federal-State market news reports listed here may be of interest to you. The Federal-State Market News Service is administered by the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with

State agencies.

One of the most comprehensive of the weekly reports on processing crops is that issued during the harvesting season by the Federal-State fruit and vegetable market news office at Benton Harbor, Mich. It shows the volume of strawberries, blueberries, boysenberries, blackberries, and black raspberries delivered each week to processors in Michigan, with cumulative totals for the season to date and comparisons with the previous season. Prices which processors are paying growers for berries are included.

Another part of the report—weekly information on quantities of red tart cherries used for canning and for freezing throughout the five-State Great Lakes region—is very important to processors throughout the area in planning and scheduling a balanced pack. A recent addition to the Benton Harbor processing crops report is information on weekly grower deliveries of fresh asparagus to Michigan canning and freezing plants.

The Seattle office also issues reports on berries for processing. This weekly report shows the total grower deliveries to processors of strawberries, blueberries, and caneberries in Oregon and Washington, together with processors' prices to growers.

The San Francisco office issues a similar report showing volume of weekly deliveries of strawberries,

boysenberries, and blackberries to California processors, and the prices received by growers.

Information on berries for processing is exchanged by these three offices through the leased-wire system connecting all market news offices, so the reports issued from each office include data on processing developments in the other two areas as well.

A weekly report issued from the Martinsburg, W.Va., market news office covers market conditions and prices for apples sold to processors in the four-State Appalachian area, western New York, Michigan, California and Washington. Similar reports are issued each week from market news offices in Yakima, Wash., Rochester, N.Y., and Benton Harbor, Mich., during the season when apples are moving to processors.

One of the well-established reports on crops for processing is the weekly California wine report issued by the San Francisco Federal-State market news office. It provides information on the prices wineries pay growers for grapes in each of the important producing areas of California, together with data on the weekly tonnage of grapes crushed for wine. The report also includes data on prices California wineries receive on sales of bulk wine.

In several locations, market news reports carry information on current prices paid potato growers by chip



SPECIALLY MADE FOR ASTRONAUTS

*A processing plant under Federal meat and poultry inspection
produces wholesome meals for our space crews
before a trip to the moon.*

ON PROCESSING CROPS

By Arthur E. Browne

manufacturers. These reports are issued during the marketing seasons from market news offices in Hastings, Fla., Elizabeth City, N.C., Philadelphia (for the eastern Pennsylvania producing area), and Rochester, N.Y. (for the western and central New York producing area). At Presque Isle, Me., the Federal-State market news office regularly reports prices paid growers for potatoes to be used in all forms of processing. Similar reports on sweetpotatoes to be used for processing are issued from market news offices at Baton Rouge, La., covering the Louisiana production area and from Raleigh, N.C., covering the North Carolina producing area.

Fruit and vegetable market news reports on processing crops are initiated at the request of members of an industry and are designed to meet the particular information needs of each industry group. If you would like to receive any of the reports listed here, get in touch with the fruit and vegetable market news office in your area or write the Fruit and Vegetable Market News Service, Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. □

*The author is Deputy Director,
Fruit and Vegetable Division,
C&MS, USDA.*

A MAN MAY WALK on the moon in July. Men have already orbited around the celestial body astronaut James Lovell described as looking "like plaster of Paris."

The age of the Apollo flights has produced many new things—Service Propulsion System Engine, Lunar Module—all specially made. And even the meals the astronauts eat prior to flight are specially made.

A processing plant operating under the Federal meat and poultry inspection program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, has produced specially prepared meals to be eaten by the astronauts during the time they spend before a flight in the controlled atmosphere of a mobile unit.

The inspection given their meals is like the inspection given to all federally inspected meat and poultry products, but goes a little further.

The inspector checks the meat and poultry products and all the other ingredients to make sure they are wholesome, and he examines the meals through all the steps of processing to make sure they are properly prepared. At all stages of the fixing, cooking, cooling, and freezing, the company subjects the astronauts' meals to bacteriological analysis to make sure they are sterile enough to go into the mobile unit.

Each portion of the meal is packed under inspection in a small foil-covered dish which is wrapped again before being put into the final shipping carton, along with specified amounts of dry ice and a thermometer to register the temperature of the meals throughout shipping to Cape Kennedy, Fla. The packages are made of a special material which

is treated with a sterilizing agent before being put into the unit.

The labeling on the shipping cartons which contain breakfast, lunch, and dinner is exempt from some of the regulations C&MS enforces for the consumer products it inspects.

The outside carton states that there are meals inside, but does not name them the way a consumer package must. It does show the complete list of ingredients and the name and address of the packer or distributor. Because the dinners are made up of controlled portions, the number of meals inside is shown on the carton, rather than the net weight consumers find on the products they buy. The Federal inspection marks are on the carton—both the mark used on processed meat products and the mark used for poultry products, since meals made with both meat and poultry are packed in the same box. The cartons also bear the statement "Not for resale or distribution other than by NASA under controlled conditions."

What are these nutritionally balanced meals the astronauts eat under these controlled conditions? On a typical day a space explorer might have a breakfast of fried ham, a cheese omelet, a roll, and crepes Georgia (crepes with peach filling); a lunch of roast turkey with gravy and dressing, corn, a roll, and fudge cake; and a dinner of roast beef, duchess potatoes, green peas with mushrooms, another roll, and an almond torte.

The astronauts eat well before they ride into space. And C&MS inspectors check to make sure the meals they eat are wholesome, just as they check the products the people who stay on earth buy. □

CONSUMER AND MARKETING BRIEFS

Selected short items on C&MS activities in consumer protection, marketing services, market regulation, and consumer food programs.

COLLEGIATE F&V INSPECTORS

From the first of July until about the first of September a group of college teachers and students in California is very busy. First, they attend training schools together for several days. After school, the teachers and students work side by side.

These college teachers and students are Federal-State inspectors of fruits and vegetables. After satisfactory completion of basic training, they are licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service to inspect the commodities on which they were given training, such as clingstone peaches, potatoes and other fruits and vegetables.

Under a cooperative agreement between the California State Department of Agriculture and C&MS, the shipping point inspection service is provided to growers, shippers, processors, and others, on a fee-for-service basis. This service is known as the Federal-State Inspection Service. Under similar arrangements with other States, the service is provided nationwide. With the assistance of the cooperating State agency, the inspectors are trained and supervised by C&MS' Fruit and Vegetable Division.

Most of the teachers and students hired for the summer in California inspect clingstone peaches for processing. July and August are the height of the season for California's cling peach industry. California is the largest producer and canner of cling peaches.

Inspecting cling peaches means checking them for cleanliness, size, maturity, freedom from decay, damage, and bruises to determine their grade or quality. The grade of the fruit, determined by the inspectors, serves as a basis for payments to growers and as a guide to processing.

Because of the large volume of cling peaches, as well as potatoes, cannery pears and tree fruits inspected, as many as 300 summer employees are hired in California. These summer inspectors include not only college teachers and students but also small farmers whose ranches aren't large enough to keep them busy all year. Also included are trained inspectors who come to California from other States, when seasonal work in their States is completed. □

TELEPHONE RECORDER GIVES UP-TO-THE-MINUTE INFO

Fast, up-to-the-minute information is the goal of the Federal-State Market News Service—and automatic answering devices are one of the means used to get out the news fast.

With the installation of a telephone recorder at the Chicago Fruit and Vegetable Market News office, this office now joins the ranks of 32 other market news offices in 14 States with automatic answering services.

The latest telephone recorder is also a "first." It is the first automatic answering service installed by the Fruit and Vegetable Market News Service at a terminal market.

Market news reporters put the recorder to work at 8:00 a.m. each day with information received by leased wire from various production areas on potatoes, onions, lettuce, celery and miscellaneous commodities. At 8:45 a.m., a report of the previous day's shipments of selected fruits and vegetables, by commodity and State of origin, is made. By noon, the message changes to information on track holdings and arrivals accumulated in 16 principal cities, Chicago potato futures, and the carlot market on onions, potatoes and lettuce. Around 2:00 p.m. information about specific commodities

sold that day on the Chicago wholesale market is given.

For the rest of the day until 8:00 a.m. the next morning, special announcements such as weather, crop production, storage holdings, and stocks on hand are available. Ornamental crop prices are reported three days a week.

For those interested in the 24-hour telephone service at the Chicago market there are two numbers to call: For potatoes and onions, area code 312, 353-7711; and for other vegetables, area code 312, 353-7719.

The Federal-State Market News Service is operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service in cooperation with State agencies. □

USDA FOOD FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Thousands of flood victims in seven California counties, displaced, homeless, and without the food and facilities to feed themselves, recently benefited from U.S. Department of Agriculture food, prepared and served to them by local disaster-relief agencies and volunteers.

And as soon as the California crisis subsided, USDA workers faced another disaster—floods in the Midwest as the near-record snowpack began to melt.

Predictions were that the Midwest crisis would be much more extensive than the California one. USDA workers prepared to face it by storing USDA food throughout the threatened areas—at several locations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois, and Missouri.

The first manifestation of need came from Sioux City, Iowa. USDA food was requested there to feed 200 high school volunteers who worked to sandbag the Missouri River.

Thereafter, thousands of flood vic-

tims benefited from an estimated 140,000 pounds of USDA food. The most critical site was Minot, N.D. There, over 1600 homeless persons, staying with friends or relatives, were expected to receive emergency donations of USDA food. □

SENIOR CITIZENS GET HELP

Senior citizen centers can do a great deal to help feed the needy aged. A representative of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service made this point clear at a recent meeting of the National Council on Aging's Biennial Conference in Washington, D.C.

Among the ideas he suggested for volunteers at the centers are:

- Sponsor food education sessions.
- Arrange carpools to carry participants to USDA food distribution centers.
- Seek out the nonparticipating and urge them to take part in USDA's food aid programs.

Welcome news to many conferees was that the centers are eligible for USDA donated foods to the extent that their nonprofit food services serve the needy aged. □

NEW INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS FROM C&MS

Here is the quarterly roundup of new informational materials issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service:

AIB-337, *Summary of Cotton Fiber and Processing Test Results—Crop of 1968*; HG-166, *How To Buy Meat for Your Freezer*; PA-708, *How To Use USDA Grades* (slightly revised); PA-911, *Food Stamps To End Hunger*.

PA-912, *The Good Foods Coloring Book*; SB-433, *Annual Summary—Poultry Market Statistics—1968*; SB-434, *Annual Summary—Dairy Market Statistics—1968*; SB-435, *Annual Tobacco Statistics—1968*.

Single copies of these publications are available free from Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please order by number and title, and include your ZIP code. □

Single copies of the following are available free from Fruit and Vegetable Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250: C&MS-3 (1968), *Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Unloads in Eastern Cities—Calendar Year 1968*; C&MS-4 (1968), *Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Unloads in Western Cities—Calendar Year 1968*; C&MS-5 (1968), *Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Unloads in Midwestern Cities—Calendar Year 1968*.

Also C&MS-6 (1968), *Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Unloads in Southern Cities—Calendar Year 1968*; C&MS-7 (1968), *Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Unloads—Totals in 41 Cities*.

Other new publications are available free from Information Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. They are: AMG-65, *1969 Acreage Marketing Guide—Spring Potatoes*; AMG-66, *1969 Acreage Marketing Guide—Vegetables for Commercial Processing*; AMG-67, *1969 Acreage Marketing Guide—Summer and Fall Vegetables, Melons and Sweetpotatoes*; AMG-68, *1969 Acreage Marketing Guide—Summer and Fall Potatoes*.

C&MS-2, *Molasses Market News—Annual Report 1968*; (C&MS-11) 1967, *Packaged Fluid Milk Sales in Federal Milk Order Markets*, by size and type of containers, and distribution method during November 1967; C&MS-44, *Grain Crop Quality—1968 Crops*; C&MS-53, *List of Available Publications of Consumer and Marketing Service* (revised); C&MS-54, *Federal Meat Inspection Statistical Summary—1968*; C&MS-71, *Food for Children*; in pre-school centers; in summer programs; TOB-FDA-12, *Fire-Cured and Dark Air-Cured Market Review—1968 Crop*; TOB-FL-12, *Flue-Cured Tobacco Market Review—1968 Crop*. □

JULY PLENTIFUL FOODS

Fresh peaches highlight the U.S. Department of Agriculture's July list of plentiful foods. Nine Southern States are expected to have some 17 million bushels available.

Summer vegetables of many kinds round out the list with watermelons and rice. □

FOOD TIPS

—from USDA's Consumer
and Marketing Service

This is the time of year to serve light and easy meals. And what better way to start off or finish a summer meal than with *honey dew melon*? Honey dews can be available the year round, but the most abundant supplies are found in the stores from July through October. When buying this fruit, look for maturity, shown by a soft, velvety feel, and for ripeness, shown by a slight softening of the blossom end (opposite the stem scar), a faint pleasant fruit aroma, and a yellowish white to creamy rind color. Honey dews will continue to ripen if kept at room temperature. □

* * *

Another ideal food for summertime is one of the nation's leading vegetables—*lettuce*. What goes better with summer meals than a green salad made with cold, crisp, lettuce? There are four types of lettuce, but whichever kind you choose, look for these signs of freshness: For *Iceberg* and *Romaine* lettuce, the leaves should be crisp; for *Butter-head* (including *Big Boston* and *Bibb*) and *Leaf* lettuce, leaves will have a softer texture, but leaves should not be wilted. Look for a good bright color; in most varieties, the color will be medium to light green. □



2



1

1 William Wilder, (left) assistant director of marketing for North Carolina's Department of Agriculture, observes grading procedures with feeder pig producer Hilton Woods. The spray paint cans in the foreground are used by State graders to mark the pigs by grade. A double mark with blue paint indicates the new U.S. No. 1 grade; one blue mark, U.S. No. 2; a red mark, U.S. No. 3; and a green mark, U.S. No. 4. If the pig is marked with yellow paint, it means that it failed to make the top four grades and would rate as U.S. Utility or U.S. Cull. Such pigs cannot be sold at the graded sale. The farmer must take them back home where he may be able to bring the pigs up to a higher grade through improved nutrition or management practices.



3

2 Feeder pig producers watch as their animals are graded by State grader Reid Sink. One producer brought 76 feeder pigs to the sale and almost all rated in the top grades.



4

3 State graders raise the gates after grading a load of feeder pigs. The pigs are then penned according to grade before the start of the sale.

4 The action begins at the auction where bids come in by telephone from buyers as far away as Indiana. Auctioneer J. D. Foust (left) takes the calls while John Parker (center), a marketing specialist with the State agriculture department, takes bids from buyers in the auction room. Grader Glenn Lilly indicates bids coming in by phone that are broadcast through loudspeaker in front of him.

How One State Helps Farmers Market Feeder Pigs

By James Toomey

IF YOU ARE PRODUCING feeder pigs that will develop into U.S. No. 1 slaughter hogs, shouldn't you get a higher price for them than for feeder pigs that lack this potential?

The answer is obvious, but the means of getting such a differential is not. However, in a number of States, they're doing something about it.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture, for example, is helping Tar Heel farmers get prices commensurate with the quality of their feeder pigs through a Matching Fund project which provides for both informational and practical aid.

In 1965, the State applied to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service for assistance under the C&MS Matching Fund Program to get its project started. The Matching Fund Program helps States that want to develop their own marketing service programs, which may range from market development to improving marketing structure. The help provided under the Matching Fund Program is both financial—it may provide up to 50 percent of the cost of a project—and technical—C&MS specialists will provide advice and assistance.

In North Carolina, the project was to set up a way to grade feeder pigs in accordance with U.S. grades, a way to sell them on the basis of grade, and a means of guiding farmers toward producing high-quality feeder pigs to get higher returns.

Although USDA provides no grading service for live animals, as it does for meat, it is responsible for developing grade standards for live animals. These standards are employed by the Federal-State market news

service in reporting prices and are widely used in marketing livestock.

USDA grades for live (slaughter) animals are based on the carcass grades—that is, a U.S. Choice steer should produce a U.S. Choice carcass, and a U.S. No. 1 slaughter hog should produce a U.S. No. 1 pork carcass.

Just as the grades for slaughter animals are correlated to the carcass grade, the grades for feeder animals are correlated to slaughter animal grades. Thus a U.S. No. 1 feeder pig is one that has the potential for developing into a U.S. No. 1 slaughter hog.

Therefore, part of the North Carolina matched fund project consists of convincing feedlot operators that buying graded feeder pigs is a practical means of improving their operations—that if they can turn out U.S. No. 1 slaughter hogs, they can improve their returns.

As a practical demonstration of this point, North Carolina marketing specialists assisted a group of feeders in actually marketing their hogs. They selected those hogs which would grade U.S. No. 1 and accompanied the feedlot operators to slaughter hog sales where they could see for themselves that these higher quality animals brought more money at the market.

One feedlot operator realized \$1,500 extra for just one group of hogs by selling on the basis of grade. Up until that time, he had never separated his hogs by grade.

The other part of the project con-

sists of helping farmers group their feeder pigs into lots by weight and grade so that they may be sold on the basis of grade at auction sales.

Such "graded sales" have increased appreciably in the Tar Heel State since the project was started in 1965. In that year, only 3,000 pigs were sold on the basis of grade. By 1968, 11 graded sales were being held each month, at six different locations, and a total of 96,000 pigs, valued at almost \$2 million, were sold by grade.

The graded sales have another advantage—they make it possible for out-of-State buyers to compete by telephone with buyers actually present at the auction sale. Since they can bid with assurance on the basis of the known quality of the pigs, buyers from an increasing number of States are taking part in the auctions. Among those participating in the auctions by telephone have been buyers from Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Indiana.

Also helping to spread the "gospel" on graded sales is the North Carolina Graded Feeder Pig Marketing Association, formed in 1966 to help maintain uniform practices among the auction sales in the State and to develop markets outside the State for the graded feeder pigs.

Market information is released after each sale, listing the prices brought by each grade and weight, so that farmers throughout the area can compare these prices with those paid at other auctions and with sales made through other outlets.

Other States providing a similar grading service for producers of feeder pigs include Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. □

The author is a Marketing Specialist, Matching Fund Program, C&MS, USDA.



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If you grow processing crops purchased on an open market basis, some of the less well-known market news reports will be of interest. See page 10.



CLIFFORD M. HARDIN
Secretary of Agriculture

ROY W. LENNARTSON, Administrator
Consumer and Marketing Service

Editor, Regina M. McDowell
Assistant Editor, Bonnie W. Pok

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